

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A system for limiting engine speed, comprising:  
  
an engine speed monitor;  
  
operation monitor for tracking engine operating time;  
  
a limiter for limiting engine speed when the monitor determines that a first predetermined speed has been exceeded before a first predetermined engine operating time has expired.
2. A system according to claim 1, wherein the limiter includes a plurality of predetermined speeds and associated engine operating times.
3. A system according to claim 1, wherein the limiter places the engine in a stuttering mode while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed.
4. A system according to claim 1, wherein the limiter stops firing the spark plugs while the engine speed is above a second predetermined speed greater than the first predetermined speed.
5. A system according to claim 1, wherein the limiter limits engine speed when the monitor determines that a second predetermined speed has been exceeded before a second predetermined operating time has been met.
6. A system according to claim 5, wherein the limiter limits engine speed when the monitor determines that a third predetermined speed has been exceeded before a third predetermined operating time has been met.
7. A system according to claim 5, wherein the limiter places the engine in a stuttering mode while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed

8. A system according to claim 3, wherein the limiter stops firing the spark plugs twice and fires twice while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed.
9. A system according to claim 3, wherein the limiter stops firing the spark plugs while the engine speed is above a second predetermined speed greater than the first predetermined speed.
10. A system according to claim 9, wherein the limiter stops firing the spark plugs twice and fires twice while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed.
11. A method of limiting maximum engine speed, comprising:
  - monitoring engine speed;
  - tracking engine operating time;
  - detecting when engine speed exceeds a predetermined first speed before an associated first predetermined engine operating time has expired; and
  - limiting engine speed while the first speed is exceeded.
12. A method according to claim 11, wherein a plurality of predetermined speeds are detected for a plurality of associated engine operating times.
13. A method according to claim 12, wherein limiting engine speed comprises stuttering the ignition firing while the engine speed is above the first speed.
14. A method according to claim 13, wherein limiting engine speed comprises stopping ignition firing while the engine speed is above a second predetermined speed greater than the first speed.
15. A method according to claim 12, wherein limiting engine speed comprises limiting engine speed when the monitoring determines that a second predetermined speed has been exceeded before a second predetermined operating time has expired.

16. A method according to claim 15, wherein limiting engine speed comprises limiting engine speed when the monitoring determines that a third predetermined speed has been exceeded before a third predetermined operating time has expired.
17. A method according to claim 15, wherein while the engine speed is above the second predetermined speed, the limiting engine speed comprises alternating modes of:
- stopping the ignition from firing twice, and
  - firing the ignition twice.
18. A method according to claim 12, wherein limiting engine speed comprises stopping ignition firing twice and firing the ignition twice while the engine speed is above the first speed.
19. A method according to claim 13, wherein limiting engine speed comprises stopping ignition firing while the engine speed is above a second predetermined speed greater than the first speed.
20. An internal combustion engine, comprising:
- one or more cylinders;
  - an ignition firing to spark plugs;
  - an engine speed monitor;
  - operation monitor for tracking engine operating time;
  - a limiter for limiting engine speed when the monitor determines that a first predetermined speed has been exceeded before a first predetermined engine operating time has expired.
21. An engine according to claim 20, wherein the limiter includes a plurality of predetermined speeds and associated engine operating times.

22. An engine according to claim 21, wherein the limiter stutters the engine while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed.
23. An engine according to claim 22, wherein the limiter stops firing to the spark plugs twice and fires twice while the engine speed is above the first predetermined speed.
24. An engine according to claim 20, wherein the limiter stops firing to the spark plugs while the engine speed is above a second predetermined speed greater than the first engine speed.
25. An engine according to claim 20, wherein the limiter limits engine speed when the monitor determines that a second predetermined speed has been exceeded before a second predetermined operating time has been met.
26. An engine according to claim 25, wherein the limiter limits engine speed when the monitor determines that a third predetermined speed has been exceeded before a third predetermined operating time has been met.
27. An engine according to claim 22, wherein the limiter stops firing the spark plugs twice and fires twice while the engine speed is above the second predetermined speed.